

RESOLUTION NO. 2019-01

Establishing a partnership with Netwurx Internet, LLC to provide a phase 1 Broadband infrastructure and services to underserved areas of Jefferson County

Executive Summary

Broadband is often cited as the infrastructure of the future. Attracting new businesses, education access, residential appeal and quality of life will be impacted by the availability of a community's broadband service. Jefferson County has parts of the County that are underserved in broadband capabilities. This has been identified as a priority in numerous ways, but most recently through the County's strategic plan. To date, the County has been designated as a Broadband Forward Community by the Wisconsin Public Service Commission and created a Broadband Working Group. Further, the County has set aside funds in the 2019 budget to provide matching dollars towards the development of broadband infrastructure, including technical assistance.

Netwurx Internet, LLC has expressed an interest to continue to develop broadband infrastructure in Jefferson County and has requested to partner with the County to assist with broadband infrastructure development. Netwurx Internet currently has a presence in our County to include sponsorship of the Fair Park, as well as assisting the Town of Watertown in its grant process with the Public Service Commission. In coordination with the Broadband Working Group, Netwurx Internet has developed a plan for phase 1 of its project which will provide broadband service to residential, agri-business and other businesses in Jefferson County this year. This resolution authorizes Netwurx Internet to start phase 1 of this project which will be a test project with the goal of providing broadband service to approximately 257 residential properties, 13 agri-businesses, 68 other businesses, 2 multi dwelling units and 2 county facilities. The County's portion of the project is anticipated to be \$45,610 with Netwurx Internet contributing \$30,408. The Broadband Working Group considered this resolution at its meeting on April 11, 2019, and recommended forwarding to the County Board for approval.

The Broadband Working Group will continue to develop a phased plan to provide additional coverage across the county, specifically geared towards a 2019 summer grant cycle. These efforts will include working to develop additional partnerships to include working with Dodge County and UW-Whitewater.

WHEREAS, the Executive Summary is incorporated into this resolution, and

WHEREAS, the County's Strategic Plan has identified broadband as being a key infrastructure for Jefferson County, necessary for the County to be competitive, and

WHEREAS, the County recognizes working with partners is needed to provide this service to underserved areas of the County that may not otherwise receive reliable service, and

WHEREAS, initiating this project will make the County more competitive for future grant opportunities, and

WHEREAS, the Broadband Working Group supports the partnership with Netwurx Internet, LLC and Phase 1 of this project.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the County Board authorizes the County Administrator to enter into a partnership agreement with Netwurx Internet, LLC for phase 1 of the project to develop broadband infrastructure in Jefferson County.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Jefferson County will continue to seek partners to continue the development of broadband infrastructure in Jefferson County.

Fiscal Note: Costs associated with this partnership will be \$45,610. Funds have been included in the 2019 budget as a contingency line item to implement the strategic plan, account number 11002.599908. These funds will be transferred into the County Administration budget account number 11101.533228 (Administration – Internet). This is a budget adjustment. County Board approval requires a two-thirds vote of the entire membership of the County Board (20 votes of the 30 member County Board).

Ayes 25 Noes 0 Abstain 0 Absent 5 Vacant 0.

Ayes 25 (Jones, Tietz, Braughler, Herbst, Morris, Wineke, Rinard, Zastrow, Morse, Lund, Nass, Payne, Kutz, White, Schroeder, Mode, Kannard, Poulson, Jaeckel, Lindl, Foelker, Fitzgerald, Schultz, Roberts, Christensen), Noes 0, Absent 5 (Kelly, David, Johns, Hartz, Nelan).

Referred By
Broadband Working Group

04-16-2019

REVIEWED: County Administrator: BW; Corporation Counsel: JBW; Finance Director: MD

